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THE INTERIOR REPAINT BLUEPRINT

A Practical DIY Guide Using Contractor-Tested Methods

Based on 30+ Years of Hands-On Professional Trade Craftsmanship in Florida

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THE MASTER TRADESMAN'S RULE

"Once you learn this technique, the rest is just repetition."

"90% of painting is prep, 10% is applying it, and knowing how."

Painting the interior of a house is not an overwhelming, endless mystery. It is simply one proven room system repeated over and over. Master this standard room workflow, and you can paint bedrooms, hallways, living rooms, and trim with production speed, zero stress, and a flawless finish every single time.

PART 1: THE FOUNDATIONAL CONTRACTOR PRINCIPLES

RULE #1: NEVER BUY CHEAP PAINT

Always purchase mid-grade or higher from a reputable professional paint dealer. Cheap bargain-bin paint is heavily diluted with water and clay/calcium fillers. It spatters, drags on the brush, fails to cover, and requires 3 to 4 frustrating coats. Mid-grade or premium paint levels out smooth, covers in 2 coats, washes cleanly, and saves hours of expensive labor.

THE TRADE CHEMICAL SECRET: CHECK THE TITANIUM DIOXIDE (TiO₂)

Titanium dioxide is the pure white mineral pigment responsible for opacity, hide, and brightness. Check the label or Technical Data Sheet: The higher the Titanium Dioxide count, the better the paint. Cheap brands cut corners by swapping TiO₂ for chalky fillers that turn translucent on the wall.

THE 2-COAT CONTRACTOR STANDARD

Never quote or execute a single-coat repaint. Older drywall is thirsty and acts like a dry sponge, rapidly soaking up vehicle and binder from the first coat.

- **Coat #1:** Quenches and seals porous drywall, establishes bond, and locks in repairs.
- **Coat #2:** Floats on top, creating deep color saturation, uniform sheen, maximum scrub resistance, and zero "flashing" (shiny/dull spots).
- **Zero Callbacks:** Doing two coats guarantees complete coverage the first time, preventing unpaid return trips.

THE BRUSH RULE: ONLY USE A BRUSH IF YOU HAVE TO!

Do NOT attempt to paint a broad ceiling or wall with a brush—unless you really need an exhausting, unnecessary workout! Brushes are strictly for precision cutting. For all broad surfaces, let modern rolling gear do the heavy lifting: an extension pole, quality roller frame, the proper roller cover, an empty clean 5-gallon pail with a lid, and a metal roller grid.

THE GENERAL ROLLER RULE

Look at the existing finish before selecting your roller cover. The simple rule of thumb: The rougher the

finish, the heavier the nap. Smoother surfaces take a thinner nap, while textured or plaster walls require a heavier nap so the roller does the work without you having to press hard.

PART 2: THE PRO ROLLING TECHNIQUE & PATTERN

THE "W" PATTERN: WORKING THE PAINT INTO THE SURFACE

Most untrained painters simply slap paint on the wall and lightly roll it out in straight lines. The results are thin, streaky, and poor-looking. Here is the professional method:

- **Start with an Upward "W" Pattern:** Roll an upward "W" across an unpainted 3x3 or 4x4 foot section of wall. This unloads the bulk of the fresh paint onto bare, dry drywall without overloading or dripping.
- **Work the Paint In:** Immediately roll across the "W" horizontally and vertically to work the paint into the drywall surface and texture valleys. Don't just skim the surface—ensure the paint penetrates the pores.
- **Smooth Lay-Off:** Finish the section with light, continuous downward passes to align the stipple uniformly and eliminate lap lines.

AVOID THESE 3 EXPENSIVE ROLLER ERRORS:

1. **Over-Filling Your Roller Sleeve:** Dunking the sleeve too deep or failing to spin off excess on the grid sprays fine paint spatter everywhere—on you, floors, and plastic—costing extra cleanup.
 2. **Creating Lines with the Ends of the Roller (Tracks):** Pushing down with uneven edge pressure pushes thick ridges of wet paint outward that dry into permanent lines. Keep even, light pressure.
 3. **Uneven Paint on the Surface:** Skimping in one spot and overloading another forces you to go back over semi-dry areas, tearing the film and leaving ugly flash spots.
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PART 3: THE "STRIP-THE-ROOM" EXECUTION WORKFLOW

Phase 1: The Diagnostic Walk-Through (Evaluating the Room)

Before opening a single tool bag or paint can, walk through the room and evaluate the assigned room top-to-bottom:

- **The Ceiling Inspection:** Check for water damage, brown stains, or peeling joint tape. (*Note: Water stains MUST be sealed with a stain-blocking primer—or they will bleed through multiple coats of latex paint.*)
- **Ceiling Fixtures & Molding:** Identify hanging light fixtures, chandeliers, ceiling fans, and crown molding.
- **The Wall Inspection:** Identify popped drywall screws, settling cracks, holes from picture anchors, and high-gloss or greasy areas.
- **The Trim & Baseboard Check:** Look for cracked, separated caulking along baseboard tops and door casings.
- **Doors & Openings:** Note door condition and hardware.

Phase 2: Shielding & Liability Protection

- **The Zero-Liability Rule for Glassware:** Have the property owner pack and place all fragile items, glassware, knick-knacks, and collectibles into a safe holding room. Never assume liability for moving delicate personal heirlooms.
- **The Two-Person Furniture Move:** Never drag heavy dressers, armoires, or beds solo. Use a helper and furniture sliders to move heavy items to the center of the room, leaving a clear 3-foot

perimeter walkway.

- **The Center Cocoon:** Drape lightweight plastic sheeting over the centered furniture pile and tuck securely to lock out dust and mist.
- **Flooring Lockdown:** Lay heavy-duty canvas drop cloths across hard surfaces and walkways. On carpeted perimeters, tuck painter's tape slightly under the bottom edge of baseboards, depressing the pile so paint never contacts fibers.

Phase 3: The "Strip-the-Room" Teardown & Masking Protocol

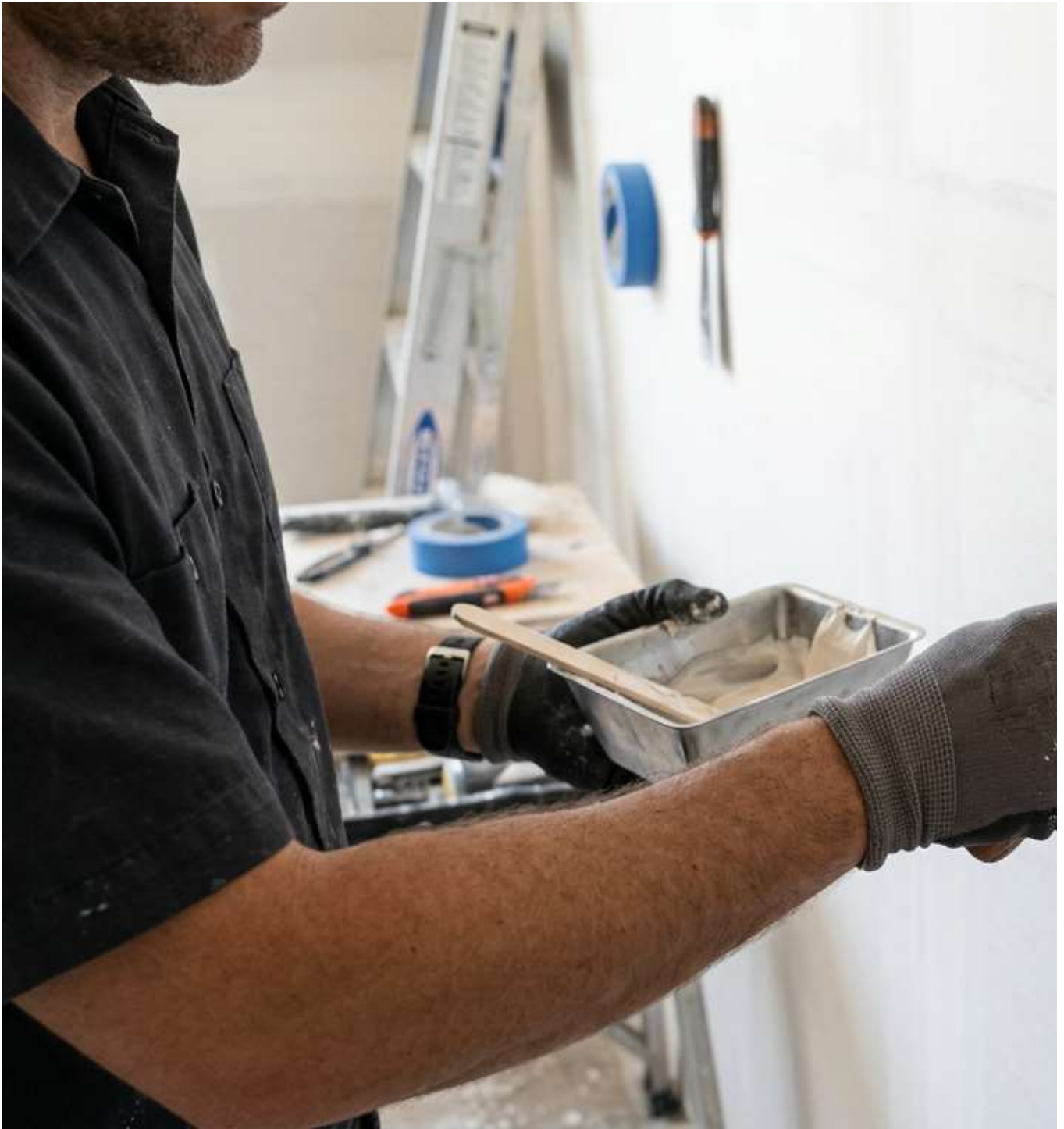


- **Remove Faceplates:** Remove all switch plates and receptacle covers (bag screws with plates).
- **Remove Ceiling AC Vents:** Back out the screws, bring the metal vents down, and dust/wipe them clean while down. Saves 20 minutes of cutting-in on a ladder and prevents dust from blowing onto fresh paint.
- **Mask Baseboards & Door Trim:** Run high-quality painter's tape along the top edge of

baseboards and outside edges of door casings. Press the tape edge firmly with your putty knife or thumb to seal against paint bleed.

- **Bag Fixtures:** Wrap chandeliers, light fixtures, or ceiling fans in plastic bags and seal with tape.

Phase 4: Patching & Repairs (Picture Holes to Seams)



- Scrape loose drywall tape or bubbling paint; spot-seal water stains with aerosol stain-blocker.
- **Patch Picture Holes & Anchors:** Pull or tap flush all wall anchors, and fill every picture hanging hole, ding, and crack with spackle or joint compound. Feather the edges thin.
- Once dry, sand flush with sanding sponges and wipe away fine dust.
- Run a clean bead of paintable acrylic latex caulk along separated baseboard tops and wipe smooth with a damp sponge.

Phase 5: The "Wide Swipe" Cut-In Technique (Zero "Hat Band")



How to Eliminate the "Hat Band" Effect:

A narrow 1-inch brush cut creates a visible, darker halo around the ceiling and corners known as a "hat band." Instead, use an angled sash brush to apply a generous 3 to 4-inch wide swipe along the ceiling line, around light canopies, along crown molding, and in inside corners. Feather the outer brush edge thin toward the wall.

Sequence: Cut coat #1, allow to dry to the touch, and apply cut coat #2. This wide feathered landing strip lets your roller overlap smoothly without the roller frame hitting adjacent surfaces.

Phase 6: Rolling Ceilings & Walls (The Professional Method)

- **Roll the Ceiling First:** Work top-to-bottom across the narrow room dimension on an extension pole using your 5-gallon pail and grid.
- **Roll the Walls:** Start with an upward "W" pattern over unpainted drywall, then work the paint into the surface and texture valleys before laying off smooth. Avoid over-filling, edge tracks, and uneven coverage.
- **Check as You Go:** Keep your eye angled toward your light source (window or work lamp) to catch holidays (dry/missed spots) immediately while the paint is wet.
- Allow the first coat to dry thoroughly to quench the porous drywall, then apply the uniform second finish coat.

Phase 7: Trim, Doors & Final Reassembly

- Paint crown molding, baseboards, and door casings with smooth, long brush strokes, after prep.
- Paint doors evenly, matching the tool to the surface.
- Once dry to the touch, unmask light fixtures and trim, reinstall clean AC vents and faceplates, and pull up drop cloths.

PART 4: PRINTABLE JOB-SITE CHECKLIST

Phase	Action Item	Completed
1. Setup & Safety	Owner removed all glassware/valuables to a safe room	[]
1. Setup & Safety	Furniture centered using 2-person lift / sliders & cocooned in plastic	[]
1. Setup & Safety	Canvas drop cloths laid; carpet edges taped beneath baseboards	[]
2. Strip the Room	All switch plates and receptacle covers removed and bagged	[]
2. Strip the Room	Ceiling AC vents removed, wiped clean, and dusted	[]
2. Strip the Room	Baseboards and door trim masked off tight	[]
2. Strip the Room	Ceiling light fixtures, fans & crown molding bagged / masked	[]
3. Repairs & Patch	All picture hanging holes, anchors, and wall dings patched	[]
3. Repairs & Patch	Water stains spot-primed with stain-blocking primer	[]
3. Repairs & Patch	Patches sanded flush and dusted; trim gaps re-caulked	[]
4. Paint & Rig	Mid-grade+ verified (high TiO2) & appropriate roller nap chosen	[]

Phase	Action Item	Completed
5. Application	Perimeter cut-in coat #1 applied with 3-4 inch wide swipe	[]
5. Application	Perimeter cut-in coat #2 applied after first coat dries	[]
6. Rolling Walls	Rolled in "W" pattern over unpainted areas and worked paint into surface	[]
6. Rolling Walls	Avoided 3 rolling errors (over-filling, edge lines, uneven coverage)	[]
6. Rolling Walls	Wall coat #1 dried; second coat rolled for 100% hide and depth	[]
7. Trim & Doors	Crown molding, trim, and doors painted with clean coverage, after prep	[]
8. Reassembly	Fixtures & trim unmasked; clean AC vents and faceplates reinstalled	[]